

# **A Situation Analysis of the Social Development Fund**

by

**Edwin Kaseke**

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Harare, Zimbabwe**

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**School of Social Work,  
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The views expressed in this paper are those of the author. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare or UNICEF – Harare.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Government of Zimbabwe introduced the Social Development Fund (SDF) in 1991 in order to cushion the poor and vulnerable groups against the initial negative effects of the economic structural adjustment programme, especially frictional unemployment, cost recovery measures and the removal of subsidies. The SDF consists of two components, the Employment and Training Programme (ETP) and the Social Welfare Component. The Social Welfare Component consists of three schemes, namely food money, school fees and health service user fees. This study concentrates on the schemes under the Social Welfare Component of SDF and does not analyse the ETP.

This study of the Social Welfare Component of the SDF was conducted from May to July 1993, relying on reviews of published and unpublished Government documents and interviews with key informants at headquarters, provincial, district and village levels.

While Government is to be credited for acting to alleviate the social costs of adjustment on poor and vulnerable groups, the Social Welfare Component of the SDF has not been able to fulfil this function adequately to date. The following problems were identified in the Social Welfare Component of SDF:

- Most of the target populations are not reached by the current programme. The school fees scheme reaches perhaps 20% of its target population and the food money scheme about 3%.
- The low proportion of the eligible population receiving benefits seems to be related to two factors: the high cost of applications compared to the benefits received and the inaccessibility of Department of Social Welfare (DSW) offices to large portions of the population. Potential beneficiaries must go themselves to DSW offices with extensive documentation to prove eligibility; several trips are often required to see an application through. Those who live far away from DSW offices or who do not have the necessary documents are thus effectively (though inadvertently) discouraged from applying. Those who fear stigmatisation as "welfare cases" are also discouraged by the system of self-selection of beneficiaries.
- Because the SDF's targeting system involves identifying individual households for assistance, application procedures and processing are paper-intensive and time-consuming. As approvals and payments are done only at head office in Harare, a lag of 6-8 months between application and payment is normal.

- The targeting system which has been adopted is extremely administratively burdensome on the Department of Social Welfare. DSW was given the extra SDF tasks without being given extra staff or budgets to deal with them. DSW staff reported that their traditional work has suffered because of the overwhelming burden of SDF work.
- The food money, school fees and health fees schemes do not have a common application form or common eligibility criteria. Thus there is no simultaneous assessment of applicants for all the schemes for which they may be eligible, resulting in extra application and processing costs to both applicants and DSW.
- The current system of using household income level as the eligibility criterion regardless of household size appears to be inequitable.
- The lack of standardised, written instructions on selection criteria and proper procedures to be followed has led to great inconsistencies in the implementation of the social welfare schemes. Many individuals and areas have been missed while others have received double benefits. The lack of training for headmasters and district-level DSW staff and poor communication between DSW and other ministries have compounded the problem of inconsistent implementation.
- No link has been established between the size of the SDF budget, the level of benefits, and the size of the target population.
- Data collection and tabulation in the SDF seem to be slow. There has also been little attempt to use the collated data to determine whether the services are reaching the intended beneficiaries. None of the DSW offices visited could estimate the size of their target populations.
- There are serious ambiguities in the relationship between the Department of Social Welfare and the SDF Coordinating Unit. The relative responsibilities for the Social Welfare Component are not clearly spelt out.

Given these problems, alternatives for reforming the Social Welfare Component are offered. The Ministry could opt for short-term measures to improve the implementation of the existing system or could opt for a more radical approach. The short-term measures could entail decentralising the approval and payment processes to provincial or district level, along with other measures such as improved publicity and outreach for inaccessible areas to increase coverage of target populations, as well as the hiring of extra staff and procurement of necessary office equipment to deal with the increased workload. Whether the extra costs involved could be justified in an era of retrenchments and cutbacks is debatable. On the other hand, a radical approach could entail the abolition of primary school fees and health service user fees in high density urban areas (thus reducing greatly the number of applications and the administrative burden on DSW) and/or the use of a more equitable system of block grants to finance schools and clinics in those areas. Self-targeting food subsidies might be preferable to the current food money scheme.

## INTRODUCTION

Zimbabwe has embarked on an economic structural adjustment programme designed to bring about sustainable levels of growth in the economy. The Government of Zimbabwe (1990) identified three strategies through which the transformation of the economy can be realised. These are as follows:

### Fiscal and Monetary Policies

This strategy entails adopting fiscal and monetary policies which can facilitate the channelling of resources to productive sectors. An important aspect is the reduction of the Government budget deficit by expenditure cuts and increased use of user fees for some of the Government services. The projection is to reduce the Government budget deficit to 5% of the GDP and inflation to 10% by 1995.

### Trade Liberalisation

This involves removing controls on international trade and this will, among other things, result in increased competition from foreign firms and perhaps frictional unemployment.

### Deregulation

Deregulation is based upon the rationale that domestic economic controls stifle competition and initiative and therefore act as impediments to economic growth. In essence, removal of domestic controls on prices, labour and wages allows market forces to play a regulatory role.

In their drive towards competitiveness, some employers are retrenching their workers and on its part, the Government seeks to reduce the civil service by 25% in order to reduce the budget deficit. It is also noted that deregulation and removal of subsidies result in general price increases, particularly for the basic commodities that the poor and vulnerable groups need for their sustenance. These price increases may put these commodities beyond the reach of the poorer consumers.

While the ultimate objective of the economic structural adjustment programme is to improve the standard of living, the Government has acknowledged that there are transitional costs of adjustment which impact negatively on the poor and vulnerable groups. The Government of Zimbabwe (1990:20) has classified the negative consequences of economic structural adjustment into three categories as follows:

- increased frictional unemployment
- inflation and relative price increases, and
- social service cutbacks and increased cost recovery.



Because of increases in the prices of basic commodities, frictional unemployment and the introduction of user charges in social services such as health and education, it becomes imperative to protect or cushion the poor and vulnerable groups against these negative effects and thus help minimise the burden of structural adjustment on them. Having realised the need to mitigate the short-term social costs of economic structural adjustment, the Government set up a Social Development Fund which has two major components, namely the Employment and Training Programme and the Social Welfare Programme. The Employment and Training Programme encompasses public works, institutional support, non-formal small scale enterprises, rural resettlement and training. The Social Welfare Programme on the other hand provides for food subsidies, health and school fees (Government of Zimbabwe, 1991).

## **AIMS OF THE REPORT**

The aims of this Report are as follows:

- a. To give a comprehensive situation analysis of the social safety net aspects of the Social Development Fund within the overall context of the public assistance programme in Zimbabwe, analysing programme design and implementation issues and exploring the pros and cons of different approaches.
- b. To highlight major problems in the SDF programmes and suggest ways of overcoming them, particularly, but not exclusively, on institutional strengthening of the SDF mechanism.
- c. To make recommendations on improving data collection and use within SDF.

## **DATA SOURCES**

Data were obtained from Government records and policy documents and from interviews with staff in the Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Education and Culture and Ministry of Health and Child Welfare. Headmasters and health officials from non-government institutions were also interviewed. The areas covered include Harare, Mashonaland East, Manicaland and Masvingo Provinces.

# **A Situation Analysis of the Social Welfare Component of the Social Development Fund**

As mentioned earlier on, the social welfare component of the Social Development Fund consists of three schemes, namely food money, school fees and health fees. Although the economic reform programme started in October 1990 it was not until December 1991 that the school fees scheme was introduced. The food money scheme was only introduced in September 1992, although payments were first made in March 1993. The scheme for health fees has not yet been implemented as the modalities are yet to be worked out.

## **Target Groups**

### **Food Money**

According to Government policy, food money is targeted at urban households with monthly incomes of \$200 or less. Other target groups include the unemployed and retrenched workers in urban areas. The food money of \$4 per person per month reflects the former subsidy on a 10 kg bag of roller meal. The rural people are not eligible for food money but are instead eligible for drought relief in the form of either the simple public assistance programme or the food-for-work programme. In addition, approved sellers in the rural areas who can sell maize directly to the rural people at reduced cost have been identified.

### **School Fees**

Assistance with the payment of school fees (tuition, examination and boarding fees) is targeted at persons with monthly household incomes of \$400 and below. The other target groups include retrenched workers and the unemployed. Pupils in rural areas are exempted from paying tuition fees at primary school level. In urban areas school fee levels are differentiated according to whether the school is located in a high or low density area – i.e. \$20 per term for high density areas and \$70 per term in low density areas. Tuition fees at the secondary school level are similarly differentiated – i.e. \$70 per term for high density areas and \$150 per term for low density areas.

## Health Fees

Although the scheme has not taken off the ground, the target groups include persons with monthly household incomes of \$400 or less, retrenched workers and the unemployed. It is noted that although no health fees are being paid to hospitals and clinics, the target groups are benefiting under a system of exemption. However, the onus is on the individual to prove that his or her household income is \$400 or less, or that he/she has been retrenched.

## Problems

### Food Money

During the study it was observed that residents of growth points such as Gutu (Mupandawana), Hwedza, Murehwa and Watsomba were not being considered for food money because these areas are not designated as urban areas according to the classification of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development. This classification has been adopted by the Department of Social Welfare for purposes of determining eligibility for food money. Unfortunately, the Department of Social Welfare has not taken cognisance of the fact that residents of growth points are also not eligible for drought relief. Consequently, persons living at growth points have no safety net to fall back on. Ironically, in one province, public assistance recipients in both urban and rural areas were awarded food money. It was, however, confirmed that this had been done in error and this has since been rectified. The rationale behind the exclusion of rural public assistance recipients is questionable, particularly given the fact that these recipients are vulnerable individuals such as the severely disabled, the chronically ill and the elderly. Furthermore, these public assistance recipients are not eligible for drought relief and are dependent, therefore, on their meagre maintenance allowances. The use of the *approved seller* concept, whereby some designated rural traders sell maize at reduced price assumes that the vulnerable groups in the rural areas have the ability to pay.

### School Fees

#### *Obstacles to Applying*

The study also revealed that some headmasters were not conversant with the eligibility criteria for school fees assistance to the point that they adopted their own criteria which

are highly selective in coverage. This lack of clarity on eligibility criteria on the part of headmasters can be partially attributed to lack of clarity on the part of some Social Welfare officials. For instance, in some districts in Mashonaland East Province, Social Welfare officials required parents to produce their children's performance or progress reports with the result that only pupils with good performance reports were considered for assistance. Those pupils who were academically weak were denied assistance. It appears these Social Welfare officials were confusing the SDF programme with the traditional school fees scheme.

Some of these pupils will not be able to write their ZJC or GCE 'O' level examinations since their parents could not afford to pay the examination fees. For example, at Marembera Secondary School in Uzumba, out of a total of 44 GCE 'O' level candidates, only 5 pupils will be writing examinations for five subjects each, with 33 candidates writing four subjects or less each because their parents could not afford to pay for a full complement of the subjects. Also at the same school a total of seven pupils will not be writing any subject at 'O' level because their parents were too poor to raise the examination fees even for one subject. A similar problem exists at Magunje Secondary School in Uzumba where 23 pupils out of a total complement of 85 pupils will not be writing 'O' level examinations because their parents were unable to pay examination fees.

It was observed that some Social Welfare officials felt that peasants were not eligible for school fees assistance except under the traditional school fees scheme. This explains why at Zaranyika Secondary School in Murehwa only 8 out of 30 'O' level pupils received assistance under the Social Development Fund, despite the fact that almost all of the pupils come from needy families.

It was noted that the Department of Social Welfare assumed that headmasters were disseminating information on the Social Development Fund. It is accepted that headmasters reach parents through the pupils. However, in some instances as was reported in Hwedza and Chitungwiza, some secondary school pupils do not pass on the information to their parents because they fear being labelled 'welfare cases' by their fellow pupils. Whilst it is true that many headmasters have been disseminating information on the Social Development Fund there is, however, an element of selectivity in the transmission of the information in some instances as some headmasters only select a few most needy cases.

Consequently, some parents may not be aware of the existence of the Social Development Fund. For example, one headmaster of a primary school in Chitungwiza argued that cost recovery demands that headmasters refer to the Department of Social Welfare only very desperate parents. In his opinion only about 5% of pupils at his school deserved assistance despite the fact that the school's catchment area is a low income

neighbourhood. A headmaster of a secondary school in Murehwa was surprised to hear that there were referral forms that have to be completed by the headmaster. He had never seen the referral forms even though he refers desperate parents to the Department of Social Welfare. At this school only 1 % of the pupils were being assisted under SDF.

It was also observed that because of the delays in receiving payments some headmasters were deliberately discouraging parents from applying for assistance. For instance, one deputy headmistress of a school in Mashonaland East pointed out that the need for instant cash in order to meet the day-to-day running costs is forcing the school to send away pupils who have not paid their fees, but at the same time refusing to refer them to the Department of Social Welfare for assistance. This puts pressure, therefore, on the parents to raise the fees on their own. The same sentiments were expressed by a headmaster of a secondary school in Masvingo Province who pointed out that he was encouraging parents to pay even though they were eligible for assistance because the school needs an early inflow of cash in order to meet its commitments. The headmaster observed that about 90% of pupils at his school were eligible for assistance, but only 12,5% had been referred to the Department of Social Welfare for assistance.

It was also observed that some headmasters, particularly in Harare and Marondera require parents to pay the school levy as a condition for referral to the Department of Social Welfare. Ironically, the amount paid as levy at some of these schools is higher than the tuition fees payable.

It was reported by a number of headmasters that some parents were reluctant to apply for assistance because of the stigma associated with welfare assistance. It was alleged that such parents felt that applying for assistance is an open admission that one has failed in life. For instance one headmaster in Manicaland Province gave an example of a young parent who pleaded with him not to send his child away for non-payment of fees as he needed more time to raise the money and did not want his child to be put on 'welfare'. This may explain why some low-income families would rather pay the school fees than apply for assistance. These parents manage to pay school fees by rearranging their priorities, and very often this requires foregoing certain basic necessities. For instance, some residents in Dzivaresekwa, Harare indicated that they no longer use cooking oil, sugar or soap.

### ***Problems with Targeting***

Whilst headmasters are doing the best they can to refer parents to the Department of Social Welfare some headmasters, however, reported that there was some confusion relating to targeting. This arises from statements issued by some politicians which tend to contradict the policy framework adopted by the Department of Social Welfare. This

subjects headmasters to unnecessary political pressure and consequently some parents end up benefiting from the Social Development Fund even though they do not meet the minimum requirements. The degree of leakage, though, could not be ascertained.

The discussion on the problems emanating from the targeting system adopted by government points to the fact that effective targeting of vulnerable groups depends on creating awareness among the intended beneficiaries. Whilst efforts were made to make the intended beneficiaries aware through the use of posters and the print and electronic media, these strategies were not very effective in reaching the people, particularly rural communities. Many District Social Welfare Officers reported an upsurge in the number of applications for school fees following President Mugabe's recent "meet-the-people" tours.

It is noted that effective targeting also depends on creating awareness among the officials implementing the programme. As pointed out earlier on, it was observed that there was some confusion in the interpretation of eligibility criteria, not only among school headmasters but also among Social Welfare officials. This may be attributed to the fact that there were no training workshops organised for Social Welfare officials, headmasters and health officials at district level. Instead, the implementing officials learnt of the eligibility criteria and procedures through verbal instructions and circulars which, according to some Social Welfare officials, were sometimes ambiguous.

## **Accessibility of Services**

The effectiveness of the Social Development Fund in cushioning the poor and vulnerable groups against the negative effects of the economic reform programme depends, among other things, on the extent to which the services provided are accessible to the target population. The study viewed accessibility as being primarily determined by the distance an applicant has to travel in order to make an application.

It was observed that the services of the Department of Social Welfare were largely accessible to people in urban areas and at designated growth points, but the situation deteriorates as one moves away from these urban centres and growth points. However, even within urban areas such as Harare, accessibility remains poor for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the handicapped, the chronically ill and the unemployed. For instance, a person living in Mufakose, Harare would need about \$2 for bus fare to travel to and from Highfield Social Welfare Office. There were reports that some applicants in Mufakose walk to Highfield Social Welfare Office because of their inability to raise the required bus fare. The disabled, elderly and the sick are unlikely

to walk to the Social Welfare Office unless they live very close to the office. This, therefore, renders the services inaccessible to the poor and vulnerable groups in urban areas. It has been noted that an applicant for food money from Norton has to pay \$8 to travel to and from Highfield Social Welfare Office. Assuming that only one visit is made, the amount spent on bus fare is equivalent to food money for two months.

The inaccessibility of services is more pronounced in rural areas. For example, in Chiredzi the furthest point (Malipati) is over 200 km away from the Social Welfare Office in Chiredzi. Applicants from Malipati need about \$50 for bus fare to travel to and from the Social Welfare Office. The very poor cannot be expected to raise this amount. If they are able to raise such an amount then they might as well just pay the school fees, particularly in view of the fact that applicants usually have to visit the Social Welfare Office more than once.

It was also observed that applicants from Uzumba had unique problems in that they often travel to the Social Welfare Office in Murehwa where they are in turn referred back to their district office at Mutawatawa in U.M.P. District. It was also observed that transport problems make it difficult for applicants to travel to Mutawatawa and be back home on the same day. Therefore, applicants have to spend a night at Mutawatawa, usually sleeping in the verandas of shops at the growth point. Consequently, many parents serviced by Marembera and Magunje Secondary Schools have not bothered to apply or have withdrawn prematurely upon being referred to Mutawatawa growth point. This probably explains why only 18 pupils out of 220 eligible pupils at Marembera Secondary School and 130 out of 389 eligible pupils at Magunje Secondary School have applied for assistance under the SDF programme.

While Provincial and District Social Welfare Officers are aware that the services they are providing may not be easily accessible to persons who live further away from the Social Welfare Offices, they are unable to take the services to the people because of transport constraints.

## **Procedures and Administrative Burden**

The Department of Social Welfare developed specific procedures for processing applications for assistance under the Social Development Fund. There are some variations between the two schemes in operation. It was observed that the system adopted was paper-intensive and Social Welfare officials were finding it difficult to cope with the large volume of work. There were variations in the interpretation of policy directives. It was noted that there were long delays in the disbursement of funds and as a result some headmasters were putting pressure on parents to pay. These findings are discussed in detail under the following three sections.

## School Fees

The starting point for school fees applications is the school. Parents requiring assistance with the payment of school fees have to approach their headmaster who in turn issues a referral form to be taken to the Department of Social Welfare. The headmaster has to satisfy himself that a parent meets the eligibility criteria. In addition, the headmaster attaches a school fees invoice for the term/s in question. These papers are then taken to the District Social Welfare Office where Social Welfare officials also have to satisfy themselves that applicants are eligible for assistance. The applicant completes a two-page application form. (See Appendix 3). Social Welfare officials complete the application form on behalf of illiterate applicants. There was, however, no evidence to suggest that illiterate applicants were disadvantaged, although this increases paperwork for Social Welfare officials. The authorisation of assistance is the responsibility of the District Social Welfare Officer. The SDF clerks complete data transaction forms which are sent to the Provincial Social Welfare Offices for onward transmission to the Head Office of the Department of Social Welfare. Upon approval of applications, the District Social Welfare Office informs the headmasters accordingly. Processing of payments is a responsibility of the Coordinating Unit at the Headquarters of the Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. Payments for school fees are sent directly to schools in the case of non-government schools and to the Ministry of Education and Culture in the case of government schools.

It was observed that some Social Welfare Offices were requesting headmasters to attach pupils' performance reports to the referral forms. Attaching performance reports is a requirement under the traditional school fees assistance scheme, but it is not a requirement under the SDF programme. In some instances, these performance reports are improperly used to determine whether a pupil receives assistance or not.

It was also observed that the system operates on the assumption that headmasters do thorough screening before they refer parents to the Department of Social Welfare. Consequently, there is little investigation done by Social Welfare officials to determine whether applicants meet the conditions for assistance. Such investigations would normally require home visits. However, the volume of work and transport constraints make it almost impossible for Social Welfare officials to make home visits. Among the offices visited, only Chiredzi office apparently had a well-developed system of home visits.

The assumption that headmasters do a thorough initial screening is erroneous. A secondary school headmaster in Masvingo Province argued that he saw his role as that



of providing referral forms to any parent who requests for it, regardless of whether the parent is eligible or not. He added that it was the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare to determine eligibility for assistance. Thus, if Social Welfare officials assume that headmasters are doing initial screening, then it is possible that there are some leakages. It also means that ineligible applicants may be referred to the Department of Social Welfare, only to be turned down later.

It was also observed that some Social Welfare officials were rigid in their interpretation of the eligibility criteria, particularly in respect of the \$400 threshold. Consequently, discretionary powers were rarely used. For example, an applicant earning \$410 per month with two children at secondary school and three at primary school was denied assistance, yet another applicant earning \$390 per month with one child attending primary school was granted assistance. It is clear from this example that in *per capita* terms the household which received assistance was much better off than the household which did not receive assistance. It would, therefore, appear that the system adopted does not lend itself to a meaningful needs assessment. A rigid interpretation of the \$400 threshold may not be in the best interests of the vulnerable groups.

Although the District Social Welfare Offices are required to advise headmasters of the outcome of their referrals, some headmasters complained that this was not happening. They sometimes do not know whether the applications have been successful or not and they tend to rely on verbal feedback from parents. Where feedback is given, the headmasters contend that it often takes too long. As a result of lack of timeous feedback from the Department of Social Welfare, headmasters were often not sure whether they should keep the pupils in school. However, it was observed that the delay in informing headmasters was largely due to the large volume of work which makes it difficult for the Social Welfare officials to cope. In some instances, it was not only the large volume of work but the organisational modalities at some of the district offices.

A major problem reported by both school headmasters and Social Welfare officials was the delay in the disbursement of funds to the beneficiaries. It was reported that payment of tuition and boarding fees was taking between 6 and 8 months before it could be effected. For instance, by mid-June 1993 payment of tuition and boarding fees for the first term starting in January 1993 had not yet been effected. This delay has serious consequences for the smooth day-to-day running of schools, particularly for non-governmental schools, which depend heavily on the fees paid by pupils. Many schools bought stationery and building materials on credit, anticipating that revenue would trickle in. Unfortunately, the anticipated revenue was not forthcoming, resulting in the inability of these schools to pay off their debts. With the introduction of the Social Development Fund, many headmasters had been optimistic that their revenue

base was going to improve. Consequently, at the beginning of the academic year many schools bought stationery and building materials on credit with the understanding that they would pay off their debts once payments were received from the Social Development Fund. As a result of the delay in receiving payments, these debts have accumulated resulting in suppliers now threatening to take legal action against the defaulting schools.

The delays in the disbursement of SDF funds have prompted some headmasters to bar pupils from attending classes and thereby exerting pressure on parents to raise the fees themselves. In some cases the headmasters are reluctant to give new applicants referral forms because of the delays experienced.

## **Food Subsidy**

Applicants for food subsidy apply at their District Social Welfare Offices by completing a two-page application form (see Appendix 4). Applicants are required to produce their national identity cards, birth certificates for applicants' dependents, proof of guardianship in respect of dependents other than own children, marriage certificates, proof of earnings or unemployment and proof of urban residence. According to Social Welfare officials interviewed, these documents are generally readily available except birth and marriage certificates. It was observed, however, that many Social Welfare officials do not insist on applicants producing these documents in order to determine eligibility. In a few cases where some Social Welfare officials enforced the requirements, applicants were repeatedly sent back until they produced the required documents.

Since applicants make an average of two visits before applications are finalised. Many applicants, particularly those who live in the periphery of the catchment area, withdraw prematurely from the process because of the costs involved. As mentioned earlier, Norton residents need \$8 for bus fare to travel to and from Highfield Social Welfare Office, yet the food subsidy is \$4 per person per month. It is therefore not cost-effective for the intended beneficiaries to apply given the fact that even after the applications have been finalised the beneficiaries will still need to travel to Harare to collect the money. In addition, if one considers the time spent on the road and queuing at the Social Welfare Office, this procedure is not cost-effective and only serves to discourage people from applying. Employers also may not be keen to release their employees to engage in a process that may take a full working day at best. This probably explains why only about 10,000 households out of a target population of 300,000 households had received food money as at 10 June 1993.

It is noted that although the first applications for food subsidy were processed in September 1992, payments were not made until March 1993. This tended to discourage new applicants as information about the delay in payments circulated.

The number of beneficiaries receiving food subsidy would increase if those applying for school fees are simultaneously assessed for this benefit. Many Social Welfare officials indicated that they do not make simultaneous assessments as they only confine themselves to the presented problem. The fact that there are different application forms for school fees and food subsidy makes it difficult for Social Welfare officials to make simultaneous assessments. The absence of a single form to cover both food subsidy and school fees means an increase in paperwork for Social Welfare officials, yet they are very few on the ground.

## **Health Fees**

As mentioned earlier, no health fees under the Social Development Fund have been paid yet as the modalities have not been worked out. Despite the fact that the scheme is not yet operational, persons earning \$400 and below are generally receiving free treatment. However, the procedures for exemption require the beneficiaries to produce proof of earnings and where such proof cannot be produced, beneficiaries are required to get a letter of exemption from the Department of Social Welfare. It was observed, however, that procedures tend to vary from hospital to hospital. Some hospitals insist on letters of exemption from the Department of Social Welfare, whilst others use their discretion in determining the status of the patients. The insistence on letters of exemption or Free Medical Treatment Orders results in queues being transferred from the hospitals to Social Welfare Offices and then back to the hospitals. Many of the beneficiaries persevere because they are poor but others get discouraged and withdraw.

It is not realistic to expect beneficiaries to get letters from the Department of Social Welfare, particularly when the Social Welfare Offices are not within easy reach. In some cases, particularly in rural areas, the bus fare to the nearest Social Welfare Office is more than the consultation or treatment fee. Consequently, the beneficiaries often choose to pay for their treatment and save themselves the expenses of travelling to their Social Welfare Office.

It was observed that rural non-governmental hospitals had difficulties in exempting every patient as it would result in very little inflow of revenue given the fact that almost all of their patients fall below the threshold of \$400 household income per month. Consequently, rural hospitals are encouraging patients to pay and there is evidence that some rural patients are paying for their treatment although the tariff is lower than that

payable in urban centres. There was, however, no evidence to suggest that those who are unable to pay are being denied treatment. It was also reported that some urban local authorities are not accepting the Free Medical Treatment Orders issued by the Department of Social Welfare and instead opt to charge a token fee. A disturbing practice at some central and provincial hospitals is the issuing of prescriptions to patients who receive free treatment to enable them to purchase drugs at private pharmacies. This is allegedly done due to shortage of drugs at these hospitals. It is assumed that the patients are able to pay for their prescriptions. Because of their socioeconomic circumstances some of these patients fail to raise the money and are forced to forego treatment. If patients cannot afford the whole prescription they may purchase only part of it. This can be more dangerous than no treatment at all. The concept of free treatment remains hollow unless patients are able to receive drugs at the hospitals.

## **Administrative Burden**

It would appear that the Social Development Fund was hurriedly put together without due consideration given to administrative implications. The Department of Social Welfare was given the responsibility of implementing the social welfare component of the Social Development Fund in addition to the Department's existing functions such as drought relief, public assistance and child welfare, just to mention a few. Unfortunately, the increase in tasks or responsibilities was not matched with a corresponding increase in staff and other resources. Only eight clerks were recruited for the Head Office. No additional personnel were provided for the District Social Welfare Offices. Clerks who had been recruited for drought relief with the assistance of USAID were subsequently transferred to the Social Development Fund to assist in the processing of applications.

Despite the recruitment of these clerks, the administrative burden still remains. It was observed that in Masvingo Province, Social Welfare officials usually work up to 7pm in order to attend to clients applying for assistance with the payment of school fees. In Chiredzi, for instance, the SDF clerks can only fit in home visits during weekends because of pressure of work during the week. These officials work at odd hours, usually clocking about twenty hours of overtime a week in the interest of the clients, many of whom live very far away from the Social Welfare Office.

Since the SDF clerks are temporary they will be withdrawn shortly and it is difficult to imagine how the existing permanent staff in the Department of Social Welfare will cope. The demand for services is likely to rise steeply as awareness increases, thereby putting pressure on an already burdened bureaucracy. It is therefore not surprising that some professional staff feel that their traditional professional work is suffering as priority is being given to the Social Development Fund. Indeed, one police officer at

Murehwa was heard complaining that the Social Welfare Officer was taking too long to submit a Probation Officer's Report. Also in Manicaland, a District Social Welfare Officer pointed out that the traditional work of the professional staff has been relegated to the periphery. The District Officer went on to explain that police officers following up on Probation Officers' Reports at the office are sometimes prevented from seeing the Social Welfare Officers by clients who accuse them of jumping the queue. It was observed that when the District and Provincial Social Welfare Offices were asked to implement the social welfare component of the Social Development Fund there was no budget for it. No provision was made for the administrative costs, particularly in respect of stationery and transport. Social Welfare officials in Mashonaland East and Masvingo provinces reported that they sometimes fail to advise headmasters of the outcome of their referrals because of shortage of stationery. It was noted that headmasters in Manicaland and Mashonaland East Provinces did not have referral forms and there was no budget to cover the costs of duplicating or running stencils. It is clear that the procedures adopted in the referral system, particularly in respect of the school fees scheme, assume that a provision exists for further screening by Social Welfare officials through home visits in order to avoid leakages. Further screening is not possible given the fact that the Department of Social Welfare has enormous transport problems even in respect of its traditional responsibilities. Where home visits or further investigations have been done these have been through the drought relief programme, which is apparently better resourced.

## **SDF Data Collection**

The collation of SDF data is currently being done by SDF clerks in the Department of Social Welfare. Whilst some district and provincial offices were able to produce the data when requested it was, however, observed that at many offices the data was not readily available. It was also observed that in many instances the data available was not up-to-date. It was noted that the failure to maintain up-to-date statistics could be attributed to the large volume of work. Some SDF clerks are also being involved in the assessment of applicants and therefore leaving very little time for statistical work. It was also observed that some Social Welfare Offices spent relatively long periods without data transaction forms, thus making it difficult to capture what has been happening.

Because of the large volume of work a lot of errors are being made in the collation of data which has, in some cases, resulted in some pupils not being registered for examinations. The absence of computer codes for some schools also affects the data collation process at Head Office as the information cannot be fed into the computer. This has sometimes resulted in double payments being made. This probably explains why the total amounts paid do not correspond with total value of the assessments.

It would appear that many of the Social Welfare officials see collection of data as an end in itself rather than as a means to an end. There has been very little attempt to use the collated data to determine whether the services are reaching the intended beneficiaries. Surprisingly, all of the offices visited had no idea of the size of their target population, yet the effectiveness of the targeting system can mainly be measured by relating number of recipients to the size of target population. Perhaps this points to the need to strengthen the Coordinating Unit in order to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities in respect of the monitoring and evaluation of SDF programmes. Using the collated data as a means to an end would enable the Department of Social Welfare to review its strategies and procedures in order to ensure that the SDF schemes are responsive to the needs of the intended beneficiaries.

## **Coordination**

Coordination between implementing agencies is an important factor in effective cushioning of vulnerable groups. The Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare has a Coordinating Unit tasked with the responsibility of coordinating the administration of the Social Development Fund. Whilst this is a noble idea, there is, however, an element of ambiguity in the structure. It is not clear how the Coordinating Unit should relate to the Department of Social Welfare which implements the social welfare component of the Social Development Fund or conversely how the Department of Social Welfare should relate to the Coordinating Unit.

It is not clear at what point the responsibilities of the Department of Social Welfare as an implementing agency end and the point at which the Coordinating Unit should come in. It was noted that the staff involved in the actual processing of payments come not only from the Coordinating Unit but also from the Department of Social Welfare and the Ministry itself. Consequently, issues of authority and accountability become difficult to resolve. Should the Department of Social Welfare and the Ministry use their usual structures to supervise the staff or should this be a responsibility of the Coordinating Unit? This ambiguity has serious implications for the effective coordination of the Social Development Fund and it might impact negatively on the intended beneficiaries.

Some Social Welfare officials complained of poor communication at various levels of the Department of Social Welfare, particularly at the beginning of the programme. They complained that policy directives from Head Office tend to be verbal with the result that they become slightly distorted and diluted when they reach the last person on the ground. These verbal instructions probably explain the variations in the interpretation of policy directives that occur from province to province or within a province. For instance, one Provincial Social Welfare Officer received a verbal policy directive to the effect that all public assistance recipients receiving \$200 or less should receive food subsidies. This resulted in some rural public assistance recipients receiving food subsidies.

Some Social Welfare officials also noted that where written policy directives were given there were some elements of ambiguity resulting in differences in interpretation. It was also noted that these written policy directives are rarely seen by the staff on the ground. The responsibility for explaining policy directives often rests with the Provincial or District Social Welfare Officer. It is possible, therefore, that policy directives may not be clear to the staff on the ground, particularly in circumstances where no seminars have been organised for the benefit of the staff.

Some Social Welfare officials pointed out that at the initial stages of the programme there was limited coordination between the Head Office of the Department of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Education and Culture, which resulted in some headmasters barring pupils awaiting SDF payments from attending classes. Even when the two Head Offices had agreed that such pupils should not be sent away it took long for the information to filter through to headmasters. The variations in the criteria used by headmasters to refer parents to the Department of Social Welfare can also be attributed to lack of meaningful communication between the Department of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Education and Culture at provincial and district levels.

Apparently there is little happening in the way of coordination between the Department of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare in developing modalities for the implementation of the health fees scheme. The absence of the health fees scheme has seriously undermined the revenue base of hospitals and clinics, particularly those run by churches and local authorities. Although attempts have been made by Social Welfare officials at district and provincial levels to explain the interim arrangements of exempting all patients earning \$400 or less there was evidence that some hospitals and clinics were referring even those patients who had produced proof of earnings. Some of these problems could have been avoided if seminars or briefing sessions for all implementing agencies at various levels had been organised.

It was observed that Social Welfare officials have no idea of how much money has been allocated for food money or school fees and consequently applications were being approved on the assumption that the money will always be there. The Department of Social Welfare requests for funds from the Ministry of Finance through the SDF Coordinating Unit. Social Welfare officials always assure headmasters and parents that the funds are available and that payments would be made in due course, yet payments were suspended at the end of June 1993 because there was no money. This is a situation that creates scepticism among headmasters and parents which might result in fewer referrals being made to the Department of Social Welfare. This puts into question the capacity of the Government of Zimbabwe to provide adequate funding for the school fees scheme. If the Department of Social Welfare were to reach the whole target population will they have enough money to pay everyone?

## **Summary of the Major Problems in the Administration of SDF**

This discussion has shown that there are major problems in the administration of the Social Development Fund. It would appear most of these problems are repercussions of a programme that was hurriedly put together, giving the Department of Social Welfare little time to think through the administrative implications. The problems are as follows:

- The task of implementing the Social Development Fund was superimposed on the Department of Social Welfare's existing traditional tasks without a corresponding increase in the budget. This has consequently resulted in an administrative burden which the Department is struggling to shoulder.
- The targeting of beneficiaries according to household income thresholds may not be an equitable strategy for cushioning vulnerable groups since no reference is made to household size. Although it is possible for Social Welfare officials to use their discretion in order to assist needy persons earning over \$400 per month, there is evidence to suggest that not all Social Welfare officials are using their discretionary powers for the benefit of such applicants.
- Although headmasters are disseminating information on the school fees scheme through the pupils, it appears that there is an element of selectivity in the targeting of needy parents. It was observed that some headmasters were not referring all those who are eligible for assistance but only selected those they considered to be exceptionally needy. This problem can also be attributed to lack of clarity on the criteria for assistance on the part of some headmasters and even some Social Welfare officials.
- Some schools are imposing conditionalities on referrals to the Department of Social Welfare.
- Some parents are refusing to apply for school fees assistance mainly because of the social stigma that social welfare assistance carries.
- The definition of an urban area which the Department of Social Welfare uses to determine eligibility for food money is too narrow as it leaves out growth points and service centres. At the same time growth point residents are not eligible for drought relief.



- Most of the District Social Welfare Offices are not within easy reach of the beneficiaries, particularly if the beneficiaries, live within the periphery of the catchment area.
- Given the long distances that many beneficiaries travel and the long queues at Social Welfare Offices it may not be cost effective for beneficiaries to apply for food money.
- The procedures adopted are relatively sophisticated as they require documents that may not be readily available. At the same time the procedures assume a screening process that may require home visits to ascertain eligibility, yet the Department of Social Welfare does not have the capacity to do so.
- A person applying for food money is not simultaneously assessed for school fees or vice-versa. This is largely due to the fact that there are different thresholds and different application forms are used.
- There is ambiguity in the administrative structure of the Social Development Fund, particularly in respect of the roles of the Department of Social Welfare and the Coordinating Unit.
- The Department of Social Welfare is operating without a SDF budget and thereby compromising its administrative capacity. It was also noted that the Department of Social Welfare processes SDF applications without knowing how much money is available for food money and school fees. Consequently, applications are processed on the assumption that the money is available.
- There are serious delays in effecting payments. The delays occur largely at Ministry Headquarters. The delays can, among other factors, be attributed to the use of a rather outdated computer system that operates on a 'batching' system making data capture a slow and tedious process. The other factor is that cheques are written manually. As a result of these delays some headmasters are now reluctant to refer parents to the Department of Social Welfare but are instead putting pressure on parents to pay. Those affected by these delays are non-governmental schools which depend mainly on school fees paid by their pupils.
- The delay in implementing the health fees scheme has seriously affected the revenue base of health establishments run by churches and local authorities. This has forced some of these health establishments to ask patients to pay regardless of their socioeconomic circumstances.

# Possible Options for Improvement or Redesign

The problems that have been identified have undermined the realisation of the objectives of the social welfare component of the Social Development Fund. Understandably these problems can be attributed to the fact that the Department of Social Welfare in particular, and the Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare in general, were not given sufficient time to develop effective strategies for cushioning the poor and vulnerable groups against the negative effects of the economic reform programme. The current system therefore needs to be reviewed with a view to either improving or redesigning it. The choice is either to opt for short-term measures to improve implementation marginally, or to opt for more radical changes of approach.

## Improvement

The present system may be improved by addressing the following issues:

- The targeting of beneficiaries using household incomes is not equitable or effective. It may be more equitable or effective to adopt *per capita* income as the basis of targeting.
- The use of different thresholds for the different SDF schemes creates unnecessary paperwork. A common threshold for the schemes should be adopted and a single simple application form used.
- In order to increase awareness of the SDF schemes and enhance understanding of the criteria and procedures, it may be necessary to organise seminars at district and provincial levels which bring together officials from the ministries or agencies involved in the implementation of the Social Development Fund, including politicians.
- Given the fact that SDF clerks in some districts are heavily involved in the processing of application it may be necessary to provide short in-service training programmes in order to instil confidence and sharpen their assessment skills.
- The definition of what constitutes an urban area for purposes of determining eligibility for food money should be widened to encompass growth points and service centres.

- It may be necessary to consider public assistance recipients in rural areas for food money as these are vulnerable individuals who include the elderly, the chronically sick and the disabled.
- Since some of the District Social Welfare Offices are not within easy reach of the beneficiaries it may be necessary for the Department of Social Welfare to adopt the mobile office concept which would enable it to take the services to the people. This would help improve the accessibility of services and thus help to ensure that services reach the majority of the intended beneficiaries.
- In order to reduce paperwork, the Ministry may need to consider processing applications for school fees once annually to cover a full academic year. Only new applicants can be considered in between academic terms. Although the Social Development Fund may lose funds as a result of some pupils dropping out during the course of the year the costs are likely to be insignificant when compared to the administrative costs of processing the applications on a termly basis.
- The Ministry may have to consider decentralising the processing of payments to provincial or district offices as part solution to the current delays in effecting payments. Timely payments would enable schools, particularly non-government ones, to meet the educational needs of their pupils. Headmasters would also not have any inhibitions in referring the intended beneficiaries to the Department of Social Welfare and also they would not find it necessary to put pressure on the intended beneficiaries to pay the school fees. Alternatively if the present system is to be retained it would be necessary to have a new computer system that is efficient in capturing data and also to computerise the cheque-writing process.
- For effective coordination it is necessary to remove the ambiguity in the administrative structure of the Social Development Fund, particularly the relationship between the Department of Social Welfare and the Coordinating Unit. The roles or responsibilities of these two organs need to be clearly articulated by the Ministry.
- Improving the current system along the lines suggested would require additional staff vehicles and equipment such as computers, typewriters, duplicating and cheque-writing machines. It therefore becomes necessary to have an SDF budget to cover administrative costs. The short-term plan for the Social Development Fund includes a preliminary estimate of 210 new staff to carry out the social welfare programmes successfully.

- It may be useful to avoid verbal instructions to officials but where these are absolutely necessary they should be followed up by policy circulars. These policy circulars should reach the officers on the ground for easy reference.

## **Redesigning**

It is noted that improving the current system would require additional staff and budgetary resources and this may be difficult to justify within the context of the economic reform programme. It may be necessary, therefore, to adopt a system that is more cost-effective and less bureaucratic and one that does not call for an increased outlay of resources.

## **School Fees**

The administrative costs incurred in processing applications from such schools are enormous. It is estimated that the cost of processing each application is about \$15. The total administrative costs may not be enormous now mainly because the system has not been able to capture all those who are eligible for assistance. If one considers the fact that primary school fees are only \$20 per term in high density areas and \$70 per term in low density areas, then there is little justification for incurring high administrative costs in the processing of applications for assistance. It may be necessary to consider the following:

- Extending the abolition of primary school fees to high density urban areas. This would enhance the accessibility of primary education. Extending the abolition of primary school fees to high density urban areas would also reduce the administrative burden on the part of the Department of Social Welfare, thereby releasing staff to devote more time to their traditional professional responsibilities.
- Reforming the use of block grants to schools to favour schools in disadvantaged areas. In order to minimise leakages, elitist private and boarding schools would not receive block grants. However a system of individual targeting would be used to capture those in low density suburbs. The use of block grants would also significantly reduce the administrative burden and would also help solve the problem of stigmatisation. Current administrative costs may be reduced by about 75%. The only major disadvantage of using block grants in respect of government schools instead of school fees is that it would somewhat erode the revenue base of Government.

## **Health Fees**

Although the health fees scheme is not yet in operation the Department of Social Welfare is suggesting that beneficiaries should be issued with Free Medical Treatment Orders at their local Social Welfare Offices. Under this system health establishments will be required to complete a claim form to be forwarded to the Social Welfare Office that issued the Free Medical Treatment Order. Payment vouchers will then be sent to the Department of Social Welfare's Head Office which will in turn release payment to the Ministry of Health in respect of treatment rendered at government hospitals or directly to the hospital/clinic in the case of non-government health establishments. This procedure requires a lot of paperwork and only serves to worsen the current administrative burden.

A possible alternative would be to consider geographical targeting for rural areas and high density suburbs and individual targeting for low density suburbs. Geographical targeting would necessitate the use of block grants controlled and administered by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare and payable directly to the health establishments or to administering authorities. These block grants should be based on agreed unit cost and should also take into consideration the size of the clientele served. Individual targeting would require individualised assessments by the Department of Social Welfare to determine eligibility and payments can be made directly to the health establishments. The use of block grants might undermine cost recovery in health as government would end up paying for people who can afford to pay. However, the costs of leakages are likely to be insignificant when compared to the administrative costs of individualised assessments and payments, particularly given the fact that in some high density suburbs over 75% of the population are eligible for assistance. The use of block grants would help to improve access to health services. It would also reduce the workload of the Department of Social Welfare and enable it to devote more attention to its traditional tasks or responsibilities.

## **Food Money**

The fundamental question that needs to be asked is, what is the objective of food money? It would appear from the design of the scheme that the objective is to raise incomes of beneficiaries so as to enable them to purchase mealie-meal. If the objective is also to help meet the nutritional requirements of vulnerable groups, then the scheme may be failing to meet this objective. If this was never an objective of the scheme then it may be necessary to consider including this objective. It can never be assumed that paying food money to the head of the household will ensure that the family's nutritional needs will be met. There are vulnerable groups in families, i.e. children, lactating mothers and the elderly, whose specific needs should be considered. The issue of nutrition therefore needs to be looked at.

## **CONCLUSION**

This situation analysis of the Social Development Fund has shown that the majority of the intended beneficiaries are not benefiting from its provisions. It is estimated that current coverage stands at less than 5% for food money and 20% for school fees as of June 1993. The targeting system and procedures adopted are in the main, not responsive to the needs of the poor and vulnerable groups. However, the Ministry should be commended for developing systems and procedures within the limited time given. It is now necessary for the Ministry to explore other alternative strategies for cushioning the poor and vulnerable groups against the negative effects of the economic structural adjustment programme. In identifying possible alternatives, it may be important for the Ministry to take cognisance of the fact that some desirable options may not be in harmony with the demands of the economic reform programme. The challenge, therefore, is to come up with alternatives that do not undermine the economic reform programme. In the face of limited resources it is necessary to adopt strategies that are cost-effective, yet still reach the majority of the target group.

## **APPENDIX 1: LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS**

### **Harare**

#### ***Ministry of the Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare***

- Mrs. Bere, (Executive Officer, Head Office, Department of Social Welfare)
- Ms. M. Chineta, (Senior Nursing Officer, Harare Central)
- Mrs. Garikai, (Welfare Assistant, Harare Central)
- Mrs. Goronga, (District Social Welfare Officer, Harare Central)
- Mr. B. Gumede, (Provincial Social Welfare Officer, Harare)
- Mrs. I. Hove, (Social Welfare Officer, Head Office)
- Mr. J. Jabangwe, (Acting District Social Welfare Officer, Highfield)
- Mrs. F. Kaseke, (Social Welfare Officer, Harare Central)
- Mr. C. Kasere, (Deputy Director)
- Ms. P. Kasim, (Acting Computer Programmer)
- Mr. Masoka, (Acting Permanent Secretary/Director, Labour Administration)
- Mr. Matembu, (Social Welfare Officer, Highfield)
- Mrs. E. Matiza, (Social Welfare Officer, Highfield)
- Mr. Mbanga, (Provincial Executive Officer)
- Mrs. I. Mbewe, (Computer Clerk)
- Mr. Mhembere, (Staffing Officer, Department of Social Welfare)
- Mr. S.G. Mhishi, (Coordinator, SDF Coordination Unit)
- Mr. A. Mukwewa, (Acting Director, Department of Social Welfare)
- Mrs. Munonyara, (Senior Executive Officer)
- Miss J. Msimbo, (Social Welfare Officer, Harare Central)
- Mr. Repo, (District Social Welfare Officer, Chitungwiza)
- Mrs. M. Tsiga, (Social Welfare Officer, Harare Central)

#### ***Ministry of Education and Culture***

- Mr. Gumiro, (Under Secretary, Revenue)
- Mr. Mkumbuzi, (Regional Director)

#### ***Headmasters/Deputy Headmaster***

- Mr. Maramba, (Deputy Headmaster, Zengeza)
- Mr. Tawanda, (Deputy Headmaster, Zengeza)

***Ministry of Health and Chitungwiza Town Council***

- Mr. Chidemo, (Hospital Administrator)
- Sr. Choguya (Matron, Chitungwiza)
- Sr. Dhlakana, (Matron, Chitungwiza)
- Mr. Katekete, (Under Secretary)
- Mr. R. Macheka, (Senior Health Administrator)
- Ms. B.B. Nqono, (Medical Social Worker, Parirenyatwa Hospital)

**Mashonaland East Province*****Department of Social Welfare***

- Mr. R. Bubu, (Welfare Assistant, Murehwa)
- Miss H. Chinoka, (SDF Clerk, Marondera)
- Mr. Chipfupa, (Welfare Assistant, Hwedza)
- Mr. M. Makusha, (SDF Clerk, Murehwa)
- Mrs. P. Motsi, (Acting Provincial Social Welfare Officer)
- Ms. C. Mubariri, (SDF Clerk, Marondera)
- Mr. W. Shamuyarira, (Acting District Social Welfare Officer)

***Ministry of Health and Child Welfare***

- Mrs. Charambu, (Hospital Administrator, Murehwa)
- Mrs. Chigodora, (Nursing Sister, Marondera)
- Mrs. M. Nyagomo, (Nurse, Uzumba)
- Mr. J.E. Nymagodo, (Medical Social Worker, Marondera)

***Ministry of Education and Culture***

- Mr. S. Chigwedere, ( Regional Director )
- Mr. C. Chirimuta, (Acting Headmaster, Uzumba)
- Mr. K. Chivaya, (Headmaster, Uzumba )
- Mr. G. Foroma, (Headmaster, Marondera)
- Mr. Kangara, (Headmaster, Murehwa )
- Mrs. E. Kutoka, (Deputy Headmistress, Marondera)
- Mr. S. Mupundu, ( Deputy Headmaster, Murehwa )
- Mr. Muzambwindo, (Deputy Headmaster, Murehwa)
- Miss Zungunde, (Deputy Headmistress, Hwedza)



## Masvingo Province

### *Department of Social Welfare*

- Mrs. Dhlembeu, (Provincial Social Welfare Officer)
- Mrs . Mapfumo, ( Executive Officer )
- Mr. C. Mawere, ( SDF Clerk Chiredzi )
- Mr. Muchipisi, (Social Welfare Officer, Chiredzi )
- Mr. Phiri, (Welfare Assistant, Gutu)
- Miss M. Rapotso, (SDF Clerk, Chiredzi )
- Mrs. Soko, (Social Welfare Officer, Masvingo)

### *Ministry of Health and Child Welfare*

- Mrs. Mautsebo, (Matron, Gutu Mission Hospital )
- Mrs. H. Mlambo, (Nursing Sister, Chiredzi Government Hospital )
- Mr . F. Mugoni, (Hospital Administrator, Chiredzi )
- Mr. Mitemwa, (Hospital Administrator, Gutu)

### *Ministry of Education and Culture*

- Mr B Makasi, (Education Officer, Examinations)
- Mr. R. Kasenya, (Headmaster, Gutu)
- Ms. D. Mugwebi, (Deputy Headmistress, Chiredzi)
- Mr. F. Munereyi, (Headmaster, Chiredzi)

## Manicaland Province

### *Department of Social Welfare*

- Mr. Chinake, (District Social Welfare Officer, Mutare)
- Miss D. Mlambo, (Social Welfare Official, Mutasa)
- Mr. I. Mutero, (Provincial Social Welfare Officer)
- Mr. Mutsemi, (District Social Welfare Officer, Rusape)

### *Ministry of Health and Child Welfare*

- Mr. R. Chinowaita (Medical Social Worker, Mutare)

### *Ministry of Education and Culture*

- Mr. O. Chigumira (Headmaster, Rusape)
- Mr. Mr Mukuzvazva (Deputy- Headmaster, Mutare)
- Mr. T. Mushati (Headmaster, Mutasa)
- Mr A Nyangwaya (Headmaster, Mutasa)
- Mr. C. Totombe, (Deputy Headmaster, Mutare)

## **APPENDIX 2: A SITUATION ANALYSIS OF THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND**

### **Structured Interview Schedule**

Name of Respondent..... Designation.....

District..... Province.....

1. When did you start implementing the SDF programmes?
  - a. Food subsidy.....
  - b. School fees.....
  - c. Health fees.....
2. Who are the beneficiaries of the SDF programmes? Explain eligibility; criteria.
3. What is the size of your target population (approximately)?
4. How many applicants have been assisted under each programme and at what cost?
5. How are the beneficiaries made aware of the SDF programmes?
6. Do you think the majority of the people in your catchment area are aware of the SDF programmes?
7. Are the services easily accessible to the beneficiaries? Explain your answer.
8.
  - a. Who handles SDF applications (professional or non-professional staff)?
  - b. Explain why.
9.
  - a. What are the documents needed by applicants?
  - b. Are these readily available?
10. What are the procedures for the SDF programmes?
11. How long does it take for applicants to receive assistance?
12. On average how many visits does a client make before finalisation of procedures?
13. Are you satisfied with the coordination within the different levels of the Department of Social Welfare, between the Department of Social Welfare and its parent Ministry and between the Department of Social Welfare and other agencies involved in the implementation of SDF programmes?
14. What are the major problems that you have encountered in the implementation of SDF programmes?
15. How can these problems be solved?
16. Please give specific recommendations for improving the overall implementation of the SDF programmes.

## **APPENDIX 3: APPLICATION FOR FOOD MONEY**

Code SWFM/SDF

District File No .....

Provincial File No. ....

Head Office No. ....

Computer No .....

### ***1. Applicant's Circumstances***

Name of applicant.....

Date of birth..... I.D. No.....

Marital Status..... Confirmed/Not Confirmed

Name of spouse(s)..... I.D. Nos .....

Physical address.....  
(Confirmed/Not Confirmed by rent card, lodger card or any other acceptable form)

Postal address .....

### ***2. Means of Livelihood***

Nature of employment.....  
(Confirmed/Not Confirmed by employer)Monthly earning from employment.....  
(Confirmed/Not Confirmed by employer)If unemployed source of living.....  
(Confirmed/Not Confirmed by acceptable authority)

Monthly earnings from this source .....

Other sources of income.....  
and monthly earnings.....  
(Confirmed/Not Confirmed by acceptable authority)

### 3. Family Composition

Children and dependents staying with applicant: .....

Name	Sex	D.O.B	Relationship	Employed or at school	Confirmed Not confirmed
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.....

### 4. Declaration

I solemnly and sincerely declare that the information I have given in this application is true in every respect and understand that giving false information will make me liable to prosecution.

Applicant's signature ..... Date .....

### 5. For Official Use Only: Assessment:

Reason for assistance: .....

Retrenchment.....

Unemployment.....

Low income.....

Low fixed income.....

Low Public Assistance Rate.....

Other.....

Rate of assistance per member .....

Total assistance eligible .....

### 6. Authority

Assessing Officer: Assistance Recommended/Not Recommended

Signature ..... Designation.....

Date Stamp

Authorising Officer ..... Designation .....

Date Stamp

NB This form must be completed by the head of the household (who is earning \$200 and below) in full and all confirmation documents must be produced. If not, assistance may not be rendered or may be given at a rate determined by Assessing Officer.

\* Please tick the applicant's alternative where confirmation is sought

## **APPENDIX 4: APPLICATION FOR GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE**

Code S.W. 1

District File No.....

Provincial File No. ....

Computer No.....

STAMP

(This form should be completed by the applicant and full answers given to all questions)

1. Type of assistance required: .....

Name of applicant in full: .....

Citizenship .....

Home address:.....

Postal/Physical address: .....

Date and place of birth: .....

N.R. number: .....

Name of wife/husband:.....

Citizenship: .....

Are you married, widowed, divorced, single or deserted?.....

Place and date of marriage:.....

Registration number: .....

Type of marriage – civil, customary or church?.....

If living apart, give date of separation and action taken to obtain maintenance:.....

2.

Husband

Wife

Place of birth .....

Home address .....

Date of entry into Zimbabwe.....

Country of previous residence.....

Usual occupation .....

Present occupation.....

Name of employer.....

Earnings.....

If unemployed, name of last employer.....

Date of last employment.....

Reason for losing employment.....

Are you fit for work?.....

If not, nature of illness or disability.....

Name of doctor.....

Have you claimed workmen's compensation?.....

Are you/your wife/husband registered at the Government Employment Exchange?.....

Are you or your wife/husband receiving any pension? .....

Give details .....

3. Dependents, school age and under, living at home:

Name	Relationship	Date of birth	Place of birth	Where birth registered	Day/Board school
.....					

4. Children or stepchildren who have left school and are living at home:

Name.....	Age .....	Place of birth	Occupation .....
Earnings ..... Amout remitted.....			

5. Name and address of landlord:.....

Rent paid: \$.....per month

If home owner, state number of lodgers and rent received: .....

If bond holder, state monthly interest on bond:.....

With whom is the bond held? Give address:.....

Have you or your wife disposed of any property, cattle, shares or other assets during the last five years?.....

Are you or any of your dependents beneficiaries in any estate? .....

How much cash have you and your wife on hand? .....

Have you or your wife an account at any bank, building society  
or post office?.....

Give account /book number and branch of bank: .....

Give the amount of balance in the account/s: .....

Have you/your wife any income from any other source? .....

I understand that any assistance I may receive is granted on the following conditions:

- a. That while in receipt of assistance I must keep the Department of Social Services advised of any change in my current address.
- b. That while in receipt of assistance I must advise the Department of Social Services of any change in my circumstances or those of my household without delay.

I solemnly and sincerely declare that the statements furnished upon this application are correct in every particular, that I make this declaration consciously believing the same to be true, and I understand that any false statement on this form may render me liable to prosecution.

Social Services Officer/ .....	Applicant's signature .....
Welfare Assistant	or mark

Date.....

Date.....

## **REFERENCES**

1. Government of Zimbabwe (1990) **A Framework of Economic Reform** (1991 - 95), Government Printer, Harare.
2. Government of Zimbabwe (1991) **Social Dimensions of Adjustment**, Government Printer, Harare.
3. Department of Social Welfare (Various policy documents and directives).



## **A Situation Analysis of the Social Development Fund**

The Government of Zimbabwe introduced the Social Development Fund (SDF) in 1991 in order to cushion the poor and vulnerable groups against the initial negative effects of the economic structural adjustment programme, especially frictional unemployment, cost recovery measures and the removal of subsidies. The SDF consists of two components, the Employment and Training Programme (ETP) and the Social Welfare Component. The Social Welfare Component consists of three schemes, namely food money, school fees and health service user fees. This study concentrates on the schemes under the Social Welfare Component of the Social Development Fund.

While Government is to be credited for acting to alleviate the social costs of adjustment on poor and vulnerable groups, the Social Welfare Component of the SDF has not been able to fulfil this function adequately to date. In this interesting study, Dr Kaseke, Principal of the School of Social Work, Harare, Zimbabwe clearly and unambiguously outlines some of the reasons for this and directs attention to some of the possible ways of improving the relief services offered by Government. Some alternatives for reforming the Social Welfare Component are offered. The Ministry could opt for short-term measures to improve the implementation of the existing system or could opt for a more radical approach. Some of the possible measures, such as the abolition of primary school fees and health service user fees in high density urban areas are outlined in this study.

This study relies on reviews of published and unpublished Government documents and interviews with key informants at headquarters, provincial, district and village levels through out Zimbabwe.

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